



National Report for Bosnia and Herzegovina for 2008

- What are the manifestations of the links between armed violence and development in your country?

Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) faces a number of important challenges related to SALW control at the present time. These include the ready availability of illicit SALW; difficulties with inter-agency co-ordination at the state level; inconsistent legislation governing civilian weapons possession; and ongoing problems with the management of large surplus stocks of weaponry and ammunition. In addition, the national system for arms transfer control is currently under development, and some gaps in capacity, legislation and practice still remain.

According to recent research, a significant proportion of Bosnians possess firearms, many of which (perhaps three quarters) are unregistered.¹ The widespread availability of SALW in BiH is obviously of significant concern, given their destabilising potential. Further, organised crime remains a problem in BiH, and the influence of armed groups, including some private security organisations, poses a threat to both the rule of law and to human security.

The independent studies conducted in 2004 indicate that over 8,000 people have died as a result of misuse of weapons since the end of the war in 1995. According to the UNDP BiH Media reporting of 2007 and 2008 a total of 455 weapons related incidents have occurred with over 26% of mortality index. Just in first 4 months of 2009 a total of 22 armed robberies have been reported.

Unfortunately, BiH does not have a system nor data base to allow the assessment of the development impact such as financial loss, impact on victims and their families and impact on local economies. For the purpose of comparison we can just provide an example of a major armed robbery where a total of 2,5 milion BAM has been stolen and not recovered to date.

To that end, BiH would seek assistance in developing the software or observatory at the state level including specifically tailored module and training of staff.

- How is this interrelation between armed violence and development addressed by your government and its national partners at policy and operational levels (including civil society)?

In 2003, UNDP BiH in partnership with the unofficial national Coordination Board for SALW Control has developed and launched the Small Arms Project for BiH that worked towards establishment of national coordination and control mechanism, strategy and action plans and elimination of uncontrolled SALW in BiH including the military stockpiles that present a great risk and threat to the local population and security in BiH and the region.

¹ Bonn International Centre for Conversion, *Small Arms and Light Weapons Survey Bosnia and Herzegovina*, (BICC, July 2004), pp. 19-23 (hereafter *SALW Survey BiH*).

In 2004 The survey showed that over 495,000 households in BiH illegally possess weapons while over 353,000 SALW are registered in civilian possession. It shows that BiH has 13 weapons per 100 people. As a result of the defence reforms over 390,000 SALW and 35,000 tons of ammunition were identified as surplus to the future requirements of Armed Forces of BiH. In addition, the security perception in BiH was worrisome in many parts of BiH. The trust in law enforcement was very low. There are 12 different laws on arms in BiH.

To this end UNDP and the Coordination Board developed and launched the Small Arms Control programme in 2005 that works towards addressing these challenges through:

- 1) Enhancing the institutional capacities of BiH to reduce and control SALW and ammunition in BiH through better informed policy makers and the support to the National Coordination Board and the implementation of National Strategy for SALW Control in BiH
- 2) Destruction of surplus and seized weapons
- 3) Disposal of ammunition through upgrade of national capacities

The Key achievements to date include:

1. the establishment by Bosnia and Herzegovina's Government of a Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) Coordination Board, an inter-ministerial body designed to work on addressing the country's SALW issues;
 2. a *National Strategy and Action Plan for SALW Control in BiH* endorsed by the BiH Government;
 3. implementation of SALW Awareness campaigns;
 4. Technical support to Joint Committee for Security and Defence of BiH Parliament
 5. Establishment and enhancement of the National Team for Community Policing and the National Strategy for Community policing;
 6. Regional Conference on Armed Violence for SEE and Caucasus regions (Sarajevo Declaration)
 7. Draft law on Arms in line with EC directive on arms acquisition and possession;
 8. Draft state law on transport of Dangerous Goods in line with EC directives
 9. destruction of over 95,000 SALW pieces;
 10. procurement of a mobile Explosive Waste Incinerator for the destruction of small arms ammunition (up to and including 14.5 mm caliber);
 11. destruction of 120 tons of small arms caliber ammunition;
 12. destruction of over 3,500 tons of unstable ammunition;
 13. demilitarization of over 6,000 tons of surplus/unsafe ammunition;
 14. Ammunition Disposal and Explosive Training for the Armed Forces and Ministry of Defence of BiH
 15. 31% decrease of SALW related incidents in 2008
- What commitments has your country entered in addressing the issue of armed violence reduction and prevention?

As above-mentioned we have jointly with UNDP BiH initiated the projects targeting reduction of uncontrolled presence of SALW and ammunition, improvement of the control and coordination mechanisms. In addition, BiH Coordination Board developed and is implementing the National Strategy and Action Plan for SALW Control that sets out the needs, activities, measures and responsible parties for the implementation of the Strategy. The Strategy is available upon request.

In line with the efforts to improve the security perception in BiH established the National team for Community Policing and the National Strategy for Community Policing that includes the needs and measures necessary to improve the trust in law enforcement and security of BiH citizens.

In addition, BiH made commitments to combat proliferation of SALW and armed violence through ratification and incorporation of the resolution into their national plans and strategies:

- 1) UN Programme of Action
- 2) The Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence Prevention and Development;
- 3) Sarajevo Declaration on Armed Violence Prevention and Development;

In November 2008 UNDP SACBIH, UNDP Geneva, Government of BiH, Governments of Switzerland and Netherlands organized a Regional Conference on the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development. The Conference gathered over 80 representatives from the Southeastern Europe, Europe, and Caucasus countries including representatives of international and regional NGOs. The regional conference entailed the endorsement of the Sarajevo Declaration by all participant countries and the signing of the Geneva Declaration by 5 countries. The text and list of countries is attached as Annex to this report.

The regional conference was organized as a result of the Geneva Conference and Declaration.

On 7 June 2006, 42 states and 17 international organizations and non-governmental organizations gathered in Geneva, Switzerland for the Ministerial Summit on Armed Violence and Development, which was hosted by Switzerland and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The objectives of the summit were:

- to raise global awareness of the negative impact of armed violence on sustainable development;
- to further support the work of governments, international organizations and civil society organizations that are committed to reducing armed violence within a development perspective; and
- to strengthen efforts to achieve a measurable reduction in the global burden of armed violence and tangible improvements in human security by 2015.

At the conclusion of the summit, the 42 participating states adopted the *Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development*. Recognizing that the fight against the global scourge of armed violence and the prospects for sustainable development are closely linked, the participants agreed in particular to strengthen their efforts to integrate armed violence reduction and conflict prevention programmes into national, regional and multilateral development frameworks and strategies, as well as into humanitarian assistance, emergency and crisis management initiatives.

As part of the “Advocacy, Dissemination and Coordination” work, a series of regional meetings are being organized in different parts of the world in order to build support for the Geneva Declaration, and to develop Regional Declarations on Armed Violence and Development that reflect their specific

perspectives of each continent and regions. These Regional Declarations are annexed to the Geneva Declaration.

Following Regional Meetings held for Latin America and the Caribbean (Guatemala, April 2007), Africa (Nairobi, October 2007) and Asia-Pacific (Bangkok, May 2008) the number of States endorsing the Geneva Declaration has increased to 94 as of September 2008.

At the Ministerial Review Summit on the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development (Geneva, September 2008), the State parties commended the previous regional conferences and adoption of regional declarations on armed violence and development. Furthermore, the States reaffirmed their support to continue their efforts to disseminate the goals and principles of the Geneva Declaration at the international, regional and sub-regional levels.

- Bearing in mind the broad range of issues covered by armed violence, which government body is in charge of addressing this issue, and what mechanisms exist to encourage inter-departmental cooperation?

The national Coordination Board for SALW control and the National Team for Community Policing, chaired by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of BiH and Ministry of Security of BiH. The Boards are inter-ministerial bodies established by the Government of BiH (Council of Ministers).

BiH SALW Control Coordination Board (further: Coordination Board) has been established in 2003, in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It consists of BiH institutions' representatives who deal with SALW issues. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina was determined as the focal point. The task of this coordination body, among others, is the coordination of activities with competent institutions regarding the implementation of actual projects and agreements related to SALW control.

Important aspect of SALW Control Coordination Board activities is cooperation and coordination with relevant state and international institutions in creation and development of certain projects, through which the UN Program is to be implemented.

In order to practically implement above mentioned documents, Ministry of Defense of Bosnia and Herzegovina - keeping in mind the protection of BiH interest and real need to control and reduce small arms and light weapons, also being leaded by security, economical, and ecological criteria - agreed and signed together with UNDP Office in BiH the document by title "Small Arms and Ammunition Reduction and Control Project" (further: the Project), in February 2006.

- What are your recommendations to (i) the UN system, and (ii) Member States to better address the issue of armed violence reduction/prevention and development?

We have achieved significant results through projects above listed. We would recommend that the UNDP remain in providing technical and advisory support to the national efforts in this area especially reduction of SALW in post-conflict and developing countries including the establishment and alignment of the legislative frameworks. For example:

The UNDP and Entities Ministries of Internal Affairs conducted the pilot project of civil possessed arms collection, in December 2006. The project was implemented in two municipalities – Novo Sarajevo and Istočna Ilidža. During the period of a month, there were voluntarily surrendered 332 pieces of arms and 5,000 pieces of various calibers of ammunition. Also, there was recorded a decline in arms misuse related violence – 60% in December in comparison with October, a month before the project inception. The project also was covered by media and activities were showed on CNN, BBC, Al Jazeera, and regional and state media. The UNDP and Coordination Board work together on state project of weapons collection, which is based on lessons learned from pilot project.

- Taking into account that enhancing sustainable socio-economic development towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals is a crucial factor for armed violence prevention/reduction, what are the measures or programs that your country has undertaken in this area and is there any obstacle that impedes the process or needs for international cooperation and assistance with the aim at strengthening national capacity?

Bosnia and Herzegovina has developed capacities with support of international community and coordination. However, significant improvements are required to accelerate the process within the national strategies. Specific requirements relate to financial and technical support for designing and implementing weapons collection and destruction activities, ammunition disposal, implementation of laws including the law on arms and the Central registry in line with the EC directives. Furthermore, the support is needed for implementation of the Community Policing activities at micro-levels. We are working very closely with the UNDP and other international agencies that are involved and providing support to BiH Institutions such as OSCE, NATO and EU.